

He see if I can get my husbands ring
Which I did make him sweare to keepe for euer.
Por. Thou maist I warrant, we shal haue old swearing
That they did giue the rings away to men;
But wee leaue out face them, and out-sweare them to:
Away, make haste, thou know'st where I will tarry.
Ner. Come good sir, will you shew me to this house.

Exeunt.

Actus Quintus.

Enter Lorenzo and Iessica.

Lor. The moone shines bright. In such a night as this,
When the sweet winde did gently kisse the trees,
And they did make no noyse, in such a night
Troilus me thinks mounted the Trojan walls,
And sigh'd his soule toward the Grecian tents
Where *Cressid* lay that night.

Ies. In such a night
Did *Thybis* fearefully ore-trip the dewe,
And saw the Lyons shadow ere himselfe,
And ranne dismayed away.

Lor. In such a night
Stood *Dido* with a Willow in her hand
Vpon the wilde sea bankes, and waite her Loue
To come againe to Carthage.

Ies. In such a night
Medea gathered the enchanted hearbs
That did renew old *Eson*.

Lor. In such a night
Did *Iessica* steale from the wealthy Iewe,
And with an Vntrist Loue did runne from Venice,
As farre as Belmont.

Ies. In such a night
Did young *Lorenzo* sweare he lou'd her well,
Stealing her soule with many vowes of faith,
And nere a true one.

Lor. In such a night
Did pretty *Iessica* (like a little shrow)
Slander her Loue, and he forgaued it her.

Ies. I would out-night you did no body come:
But hark, I heare the footing of a man.

Enter Messenger.

Lor. Who comes so fast in silence of the night?

Mes. A friend.

(friend?)

Lor. A friend, what friend? your name I pray you

Mes. *Stephano* is my name, and I bring word
My Mistresse will before the breake of day
Be heere at Belmont, she doth stray about
By holy crosses where the kneeles and prayes
For happy wedlocke houres.

Lor. Who comes with her?

Mes. None but a holy Hermit and her maid:
I pray you it my Master yet return'd?

Lor. He is not, nor we haue not heard from him,
But goe we in I pray thee *Iessica*,
And ceremoniously let vs vs prepare
Some welcome for the Mistresse of the house,

Enter Clowne.

Cl. Sola, sola: wo ha ho, sola, sola.

Lor. Who calls?

Cl. Sola, did you see *M. Lorenzo*, & *M. Lorenzo*, sola.

Lor. Leauing hollowing man, heere.

Cl. Sola, where, where?

Lor. Heere?

Cl. Tel him ther's a Post come from my Master, with
his horne full of good newes, my Master will be here ere
morning sweet soule.

Lor. Let's in, and there expect their comming.
And yet no matter: why should we goe in?

My friend *Stephen*, signifie pray you
Within the house, your Mistresse is at hand,
And bring your musique forth into the ayre.

How sweet the moone-light sleepes vpon this banke,
Heere will we sit, and let the sounds of musicke
Creepe in our eares soft silnes, and the night
Become the tutes of sweet harmonie:

Sit *Iessica*, looke how the floore of heauen
Is thicke inlayed with pattens of bright gold,
There's not the smallest orbe which thou beholdest
But in his motion like an Angell sings,

Still quiring to the young eyed Cherubins;
Such harmonie is in immortall soules,
But whilst this muddy vesture of decay
Doth grossly close in it, we cannot heare it:

Come hoe, and wake *Diana* with a hymne,
With sweetest tutes pearce your Mistresse eare,
And draw her home with musicke.

Ies. I am neuer merry when I heare sweet musique.

Play musike.

Lor. The reason is, your spirits are attentiu:
For doe but note a wilde and wanton heard
Or race of youthful and vnhandled colts,
Fetching mad bounds, bellowing and neighing loud,
Which is the hot condition of their blood,
If they but heare perchance a trumpet sound,
Or any ayre of musicke touch their eares,
You shall perceiue them make a mutuall stand,
Their sauage eyes turn'd to a modest gaze,
By the sweet power of musicke: therefore the Poet
Did faine that *Orpheus* drew trees, stones, and floods,
Since naught so stockish, hard, and full of rage,
But musicke for time doth change his nature,
The man that hath no musicke in himselfe,
Nor is not moued with concord of sweet sounds,
Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoiles,
The motions of his spirit are dull as night,
And his affections darke as *Erebus*,
Let no such man be trusted: marke the musicke.

Enter Portia and Nerissa.

Por. That light we see is burning in my hall:
How farre that little candell throwes his beames,
So shines a good deed in a naughty world.

Ner. When the moone shone we did not see the can

Por. So doth the greater glory dim the lesse,
A substitute shines brightly as a King
Vntill a King be by, and then his state
Empties it selfe, as doth an inland brooke
Into the maine of waters: musike, hark.

Ner. It is your musicke Madame of the house.

Por. Nothing is good I see without respect,
Methinkes it sounds much sweeter then by day?

Ner. Silence bestowes that vertue on it Madam.

Por. The Crow doth sing as sweetly as the Larke
When

When neither is attended: and I thinke
The Nightingale if she should sing by day
When euery Goose is cackling, would be thought
No better a Musitian then the Wren?
How many things by season, season'd are
To their right praise, and true perfection:
Peace, how the Moone sleepes with Endimion,
And would not be awak'd.

Musicke ceases.

Lor. That is the voice, I thinke, of *Portia*.
Or I am much decei'd of *Portia*.

Por. He knowes me as the blinde man knowes the
Cuckow by the bad voice.

Lor. Deere Lady welcome home?

Por. We haue bene praying for our husbands welfare
Which speed we hope the better for our words,
Are they return'd?

Lor. Madam, they are not yet:
But there is come a Messenger before
To signifie their comming.

Por. Go in *Nerissa*,
Giue order to my seruants, that they take
No note at all of our being absent hence,
Nor you *Lorenzo*, *Iessica* nor you.

A Tucket sounds.

Lor. Your husband is at hand, I heare his Trumpet,
We are no tell-tales Madam, feare you not.

Por. This night methinkes is but the daylight sicke,
It looks a little paler, 'tis a day,
Such as the day is, when the Sun is hid.

*Enter Bassanio, Anthonio, Gratiano, and their
Followers.*

Bas. We should hold day with the Antipodes,
If you would walke in absen ce of the sunne.

Por. Let me giue light, but let me not be light,
For a light wife doth make a heauie husband,
And neuer be *Bassanio* so for me,
But God fort all: you are welcome home my Lord.

Bas. I thanke you Madam, giue welcome to my friend
This is the man, this is *Anthonio*,
To whom I am so infinitely bound.

Por. You should in all sence be much bound to him,
For as I heare he was much bound for you.

Anth. No more then I am wel acquitted of.

Por. Sir, you are verie welcome to our house:
It must appeare in other waies then words,
Therefore I scant this breathing curtisie.

Gra. By yonder Moone I sweare you do me wrong,
In faith I gaue it to the Iudges Clarke,
Would he were gelt that had it for my part,
Since you do take it Loue so much at hart.

Por. A quarrel hoe already, what's the matter?

Gra. About a hoope of Gold, a paltry Ring
That she did giue me, whose Poetrie was
For all the world like Cutlers Poetrie
Vpon a knife; *Loue mee, and leaue mee not*.

Ner. What talke you of the Poetrie or the valew:
You swore to me when I did giue it you,
That you would weare it til the houre of death,
And that it should lye with you in your graue,

Though not for me, yet for your vehement oaths,
You should haue bene respectiue and haue kept it.

Gaue it a Iudges Clarke: but wel I know
The Clarke wil nere weare haire on's face that had it.

Gra. He wil, and if he liue to be a man.

Nerissa. I, if a Woman liue to be a man.

Gra. Now by this hand I gaue it to a youth;

A kinde of boy, a little scrubbed boy,

No higher then thy selfe, the Iudges Clarke,

A prating boy that begg'd it as a Fee,

I could not for my heart deny it him.

Por. You were too blame, I must be plaine with you;

To part so slightly with your wiuers first gift,

A thing sticke on with oathes vpon your finger,
And so riueted with faith vnto your flesh.

I gaue my Loue a Ring, and made him sweare
Neuer to part with it, and heere he stands:

I dare be sworne for him, he would not leaue it,
Nor plucke it from his finger, for the wealth
That the world masters. Now in faith *Gratiano*,

You giue your wife too vnkinde a cause of greefe,
And 'twere to me I should be mad at it.

Bas. Why I were best to cut my left hand off,
And sweare I lost the Ring defending it.

Gra. My Lord *Bassanio* gaue his Ring away
Vnto the Iudge that beg'd it, and indeede

Deser'd it too: and then the Boy his Clarke
That tooke some paines in writing, he begg'd mine,
And neyther man nor master would take ought
But the two Rings.

Por. What Ring gaue you my Lord?

Not that I hope which you recei'd of me.

Bas. If I could adde a lie vnto a fault,

I would deny it: but you see my finger

Hath not the Ring vpon it, it is gone.

Por. Euen so voide is your false heart of truth,
By heauen I wil nere come in your bed
Vntill I see the Ring.

Ner. Nor I in yours, til I againe see mine.

Bas. Sweet *Portia*,

If you did know to whom I gaue the Ring,

If you did know for whom I gaue the Ring,

And would conceiue for what I gaue the Ring,

And how vnwillingly I left the Ring,

When nought would be accepted but the Ring,

You would abate the strength of your displeasure?

Por. If you had knowne the vertue of the Ring,

Or halfe her worthinesse that gaue the Ring,

Or your owne honour to containe the Ring,

You would not then haue parted with the Ring:

What man is there so much vnreasonable,
If you had pleas'd to haue defended it
With any termes of Zeale: wanted the modestie
To vrge the thing held as a ceremonie:
Nerissa teaches me what to beleue,
He die for't, but some Woman had the Ring?

Bas. No by mine honor Madam, by my soule
No Woman had it, but a ciuill Doctor,
Which did refuse three thousand Ducates of me,
And beg'd the Ring; the which I did denie him,
And suffer'd him to go displeas'd away:
Euen he that had held vp the verie life
Of my deere friend. What should I say sweete Lady?
I was inforc'd to send it after him,
I was beset with shame and curtisie,
My honor would not let ingratitude
So much besmeare it. Pardon me good Lady,
And by these blessed Candles of the night,
Had you bene there, I thinke you would haue beg'd
The Ring of me, to giue the worthie Doctor?